

## Message Text

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ORIGIN SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 R

DRAFTED BY AF/E:RSBARRETT:NB

APPROVED BY AF:TWSEELYE

AF/E:RPOST

S/S:MR. ORTIZ

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O 061820Z NOV 76

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 274192

STADIS//////////

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PDIP, ET

SUBJECT: ETHIOPIAN REQUEST FOR WITHDRAWAL OF AMBASSADOR  
GODLEY'S APPOINTMENT

REF: STATE 252440

1. ETHIOPIAN CHARGE MEKBIB CALLED ON ACTING ASST. SEC.  
SEELYE NOV. 5 ON INSTRUCTION AND REQUESTED THAT AMBASSADOR  
GODLEY'S APPOINTMENT TO ADDIS ABABA BE WITHDRAWN. MEKBIB  
EXPLAINED THAT IN PRESENT TROUBLED TIMES AFFLICTING ETHIO-  
PIA THIS APPOINTMENT COULD ONLY PROVIDE AMMUNITION TO  
THOSE ELEMENTS IN ADDIS WHO WANT TO CAUSE TROUBLE FOR  
US-ETHIOPIAN RELATIONS AND THAT GOING THROUGH WITH THE  
APPOINTMENT WOULD THEREFORE NOT BE IN THE INTEREST OF  
GOOD BILATERAL RELATIONS. HE SAID THAT AMBASSADOR GODLEY'S  
DISTINGUISHED STANDING AND ABILITIES AS A DIPLOMAT WERE  
APPRECIATED AND THAT IN NORMAL TIMES HE WOULD UNDOUBTEDLY  
HAVE MADE AN IMPORTANT CONTRIBUTION TOWARD BETTER RELATIONS  
BETWEEN OUR TWO COUNTRIES. HOWEVER, THESE WERE NOT  
NORMAL TIMES AND ALTHOUGH THIS WAS IN NO WAY A PERSONAL  
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REFLECTION ON GODLEY, IT WOULD BE BEST IF THE APPOINTMENT

WOULD BE WITHDRAWN WITHOUT PUBLICITY OR CONTROVERSY.

2. SEELYE TOLD MEKBIB THAT THIS REQUEST, COMING AFTER AGREEMENT HAD BEEN GRANTED, WAS

HIGHLY UNUSUAL AND TO BE REGRETTED. REFERRING TO HIS PREVIOUS DISCUSSION OF THE GODLEY APPOINTMENT WITH FOREIGN MINISTER KIFLE, HE DESCRIBED AMBASSADOR GODLEY AS ONE OF THE OUTSTANDING SENIOR CAREER DIPLOMATS IN THE US SERVICE AND SAID THAT HIS APPOINTMENT TO ADDIS WAS AN INDICATION OF THE IMPORTANCE WE ATTACH TO OUR RELATIONS WITH ETHIOPIA. HIS PAST CAREER WAS KNOWN TO ALL AND A C.V. HAD BEEN SUBMITTED TO THE PMG ALONG WITH THE REQUEST FOR AGREEMENT. GODLEY HAS THE CONFIDENCE OF CONGRESS. THE ONLY CONTROVERSY IN HIS CAREER CONCERNED HIS AMBASSADORSHIP TO LAOS WHERE HE HAD BEEN CARRYING OUT ADMINISTRATION POLICY AND FOLLOWING ORDERS. THE OBJECTION ON THE PART OF SOME CONGRESSMEN AND SENATORS TO HIS APPOINTMENT AS ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR EAST ASIA WAS DIRECTED AT THIS POLICY AND NOT AT HIM. IN ANY CASE, THIS HAD BEEN SOME YEARS AGO AND HE HAD SINCE BEEN APPROVED FOR LEBANON AND WOULD HAVE BEEN FOR ETHIOPIA ALSO.

3. SEELYE ADDED HIS DOUBTS THAT GODLEY WAS UNSUITED FOR ADDIS BECAUSE OF CONTROVERSY IN ADDIS. THERE HAD BEEN PLENTY OF CONTROVERSY IN LEBANON YET HE HAD SEEN FOR HIMSELF THE REPUTATION GODLEY HAD LEFT IN BEIRUT AS A DIRECT, OPEN AND SKILLFUL PERSON WHO WAS RESPECTED BY ALL. HE WAS SURE THAT WERE AMBASSADOR GODLEY TO GO ON TO ADDIS HE COULD SIMILARLY DISARM HIS CRITICS IN ETHIOPIA.

4. MEKBIB EXPLAINED THAT AGREEMENT HAD BEEN GRANTED WITH FULL KNOWLEDGE OF GODLEY'S PREVIOUS POSTINGS AND ONE-TIME DIFFICULTIES WITH CONGRESS, BUT THAT SUBSEQUENT COMMENTARY IN AMERICAN PRESS HAD GIVEN HIS GOVERNMENT SECOND THOUGHTS. HE SAID THAT PRESS WAS NOW FREE IN ETHIOPIA AND THIS GAVE ALL THE MORE SCOPE TO THOSE GROUPS WHO ARE AGAINST GOOD US-ETHIOPIAN RELATIONS. HE SAID A GREAT COUNTRY LIKE THE US SHOULD BE ABLE TO UNDERSTAND AND PUT UP WITH THIS REQUEST.

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5. SEELYE SAID THAT HE WOULD REPORT THIS EXTRAORDINARY REQUEST BUT THAT HE WAS SURE IT WOULD NOT BE WELCOMED. KISSINGER

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## Message Attributes

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**TAGS:** PFOR, PDIP, ET, (GODLEY, G MCMURTRIE), (KIFLE WODAJU), (MEKBIB, GHEBEYEHOU)  
**To:** ADDIS ABABA  
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